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Dyana Werden

The Education of Women in Ancient India 1500 B.C. - 1200 A.D.

Nilima Mandal Giri

Scholars, such as Altekar (1962) and Pinkham (1967) among others, have written on the position of women in ancient Indian society, basing their work on references in the original texts (written in Sanskrit and Pali) and on the English translations of the texts. Altekar's books (1957 & 1962) and the report of the National Committee on Women's Education (1958-59) conclude that women in ancient India were well educated and enjoyed a high social status. By the middle of the ancient period, however, educational opportunities for women declined until, at the end of the period, only a few upper class women had access to education.

This article will deal briefly with what, where, by whom, and why education was provided and then denied to women throughout the ancient period (1500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.). It will be based on English translations of the original texts and on secondary sources. The ancient period will be sub-divided into two periods: from 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C. and from 500 B.C. to 1200 A.D. to show the marked decrease in educational opportunities for women.

Women's education : 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C.

Around 1500 B.C. the Aryan families from central Asia crossed the northern border of India, conquered the territories of the original inhabitants and settled in the Indus and Ganges river valley. It is important to note that accounts of the position of women during this period refer primarily to Aryan women in the Indo-Aryan society. There is very little information regarding the education of Non-Aryan women.

During this period, women as wives had equal rights in the religious sphere. Evidence of the religious rights is found in certain lines of the Vedas, such as, "O

Gods, with constant draught of milk, husband and wife with one accord press out the Soma juice"; "From olden time the matron goes to feast and general sacrifice" (Rigveda, 8.31.5 & 10.86.10; Griffith,1920 & 26); "I cook the offering. I present oblation. Only my wife attends the holy service"; "Place the pure boiler on it, woman! Set thou therein the rice-mess of Celestial Beings" (Atharva-veda, 12.3.47 & 11.1.23; Griffith, 1916-17). These lines indicate that offering sacrifices to the Gods for procuring happiness and prosperity, both in this life and hereafter, was an essential part of the religious ceremony which was performed by husband and wife together, or by the wife alone when necessary.

The expectation of performing religious duties had a positive effect on women's educational opportunities. Since women were expected to take part in Vedic prayers and sacrifices, it was necessary that girls (as well as boys) have access to Vedic education. All girls, therefore, went through the compulsory ritual, called Upanayana, for initiation to Vedic studies at about the age of eight (Altekar, 1957).

The Vedas were the focus of the curriculum and, for a long time, the only subject matter. Later, to assist in the understanding of the Vedas, phonetics, meters, grammar, etymology, and astronomy were included in the curriculum (Altekar,1957).

After Upanayana, all girls had to learn by heart the vedic hymns prescribed for the daily and periodical prayers, and those rituals and sacraments in which they were expected to take part during their married life. Women students were divided into two classes: Sadyodvahas and Brahmavadinis. Sadyodvahas were those students who, after Upanayana, studied eight or nine years until their marriage at the age of 16 or 17. Brahmavadinis, a small minority, were life long students of theology and philosophy, who were permitted to continue studying as long as they wanted, even after marriage. They had the freedom to choose marriage at a later age, or to remain unmarried (Altekar,1962).

Education was imparted to girls and women by elderly family members or by teachers (male or female) in their hermitages or households. Women teachers, called

Upadhyas or Acharyas, were prevalent throughout society. The opportunity to develop intellectual ability produced a number of women scholars. For example, the names of Lopamudra, Visvavara, Sikita, Nivabari, and Ghosa were found as composers of hymns (Rigveda 1.179, V.28, VIII.91, IX. 81. 11-20, and X. 145 respectively, Altekar, 1962; Chaudhury, 1978). Maitreyi and Gargi were illustrious philosophers in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad who engaged with learned men in highly philosophical discussions (Zaehner, 1972).

Women's education : 500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.

Women's educational opportunities declined slowly after 500 B.C. and more sharply after 300 A.D.. According to Altekar (1962), by 1200 A.D. the literacy rate among women was less than 5% compared to 30% among men. Denial of the religious rights of women and the custom of child marriage were the most important factors leading to the decrease in educational opportunities for women.

Before 500 B.C., all Aryan women played an important role in religious life. After this date, however, women gradually lost their position in religious life. The growing complexity and rigidity of the Brahmanical religion led to a gradual decline in the number of women qualified to take part in the rituals. During this period, Vedic sacrifices and the related rituals became very complex. The slightest mistake in a religious performance or in the recitation of Vedic hymns was regarded as fraught with very grave consequences. Therefore, a girl had to study much longer in order to follow the minute details of the complicated sacrifice. For the purpose of completing Vedic education, which was a prerequisite for performing religious rites jointly with her future husband, girls needed to remain single until about the age of twenty-two to twenty-four. So, one school of thought started to advocate the discontinuation of Vedic studies for women in order to lower the marriageable age to twelve or thirteen (Altekar,1962). During this period, ancestor worship was added to the Brahmanical religion. Only sons were regarded as eligible to offer oblations to the manes (the spirit of a particular dead person), (Altekar, 1962). So women were denied another opportunity to participate in religious rites.

Moreover, the religious authorities could not accept social change; the intermarriage of Aryans and non-Aryans, which had been taking place since 1000 B.C., was increasingly common by 500 B.C.. The orthodox priests did not like the association of non-Aryan wives with their husbands in religious rituals. Altekar (1962, p.345) quotes several authorities who stipulated that the black non-Aryan wife could be her husband's associate in pleasure but not in religious rituals (Vishnu Purana, ch. 26). It can be assumed that the dislike for non-Aryan women in rituals might be due to their lack of Sanskrit knowledge and Hindu religion. However, religious authorities did not consider providing the necessary opportunity for religious education to non-Aryan women. Instead, they banned non-Aryan women from religious life. But later, to avoid confrontation with the mighty kings who had non-Aryan wives, the Hindu authorities declared all women are ineligible for Vedic studies and religious duties (Altekar, 1962). Instead of performing religious duties, women were expected to devote themselves to the comfort of their husbands. As Martin (1964, p.17) quotes from the Laws of Manu, "there is no sacrifice, pious practice or fast which concerns women in particular, she must cherish and respect her husband and then will be honoured in heaven". Since Vedic studies for women were no longer necessary for religious purposes, the Upanayana (the ritual for Vedic initiation) became meaningless. Consequently, after 500 B.C. the Upanayana ceremony was only performed as a formal ritual before marriage, and was eventually eliminated.

During this period, only a few women from cultured and rich families had the opportunity to acquire a religious education and to enjoy the religious rights of the previous period. Devadoss (1976) provides some evidence of women's religious education from the Ramayana. For example, King Janaka wanted his daughter, Sita, to be true Sahadharmini (partner of religious life) to her future husband and therefore, gave her a religious education. Also, Kausalya, the senior wife of Dasaratha and the mother of Ram, was well-educated in the religious rites of offering sacrifices for the welfare of her son. Mookerji (1969) identifies some Brahamacharini (unmarried religious ladies) in the Mahabharata, for example, the daughter of Sandilya, Rishi Garga, and Bikhuni Sulobha.

Two religions, Buddhism and Jainism, arose about 600 B.C. and 500 B.C. respectively (Spear, 1972). The admission of women to the Buddhist order gave women of commercial and aristocratic families a great impetus to obtain an education. Several women in Buddhist families welcomed the life of celibacy in the pursuit of religious and philosophical knowledge. As Altekar (1962) indicates, however, women's education received no helping hand from Buddhism after the 4th century A.D..

In Jainism there were two sects, the Digambara and the Shwetambara. The Digambara sect did not admit women into the order because they did not believe women were capable of attaining salvation. The Shwetambara sect, on the other hand, was very liberal and admitted women into the order, granting them access to the highest kind of education, which was spiritually oriented. Jaina nuns, in fact, outnumbered Jaina monks (Devadoss, 1976).

At the beginning of this period (500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.), girls began to marry earlier. There were several reasons for the popularity of child marriages. Firstly, since the Aryans had established their political supremacy and were leading an easy and luxurious life because men were not engaged in fighting, the marriageable age for boys and girls began to decrease. Secondly, since women had lost their religious rights, the importance of religious education had diminished. Thirdly, the birth of sons became important for religious purposes as ancestor worship, in which only males participated, was now an integral part of the Hindu religion. Therefore, society started advocating early marriage, and after 300 B.C. child marriages became popular. By the beginning of the Christian era, pre-puberty marriages at the age of 12 or 13 became common. Obviously, girls could have received some primary education between their Upanayana and marriage at the age of twelve. Their guardians, however, were compelled to devote more attention to arranging their daughters' marriages than to their education. By about the eighth or ninth century A.D., the marriageable age of girls was reduced to nine or ten. Thus, the custom of child marriage prevented most girls and women from receiving any education by the end of this period (Altekar, 1962).

In spite of the growing number of factors that mitigated against women's education, rich, cultured, aristocratic, and royal families did not deprive their women of all educational opportunities. These families made special arrangements at home for their daughters' education. Rich families employed scholarly private tutors. In other families, male members (father, uncle, brother) or local women teachers undertook the responsibility of teaching the girls. The daughters of these families received a fairly good literary education. They studied Sanskrit and Prakrit works, music, dancing, painting, garland-making, and household decoration (Altekar, 1957). The education at home usually terminated at marriage.

Besides the private arrangements at home, the Buddhist order and the Shwetambara sect of the Jaina order established a few nunneries along with the monasteries. These nunneries admitted women who were eager for higher studies in theology and philosophy. However, the rules laid down for regulating the women's lives were discriminatory, since women were considered morally and intellectually inferior. The Buddhist nuns were completely subordinate to the monks (Mookerji, 1969). Buddhist nunneries became uncommon after the fourth century A.D., but Jainist nunneries continued for a longer period. Besides the centers attached to these religious institutions, there were a few secluded learning centers scattered all over India for higher education in theology, philosophy, and medicine. Women who wanted a higher education in these subjects went to these learning centers and studied with men. The majority of women doctors specialized in gynaecology. In Kshatriya (ruling caste) families, girls of the ruling class within that caste received military and administrative training, but some military training was offered to all the girls. As a result of this training, some queens actually governed their kingdoms and some women of the Kshatriya caste became officers and guards in the first century A.D..

Thus, at the beginning of the ancient period, women enjoyed educational opportunities along with their religious rights. But the denial of religious rights and the popularity of child marriages gradually deprived women of education. By the end of this period, education was reserved for the women of affluent and cultured families, while other women remained illiterate.

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Carmen Martin-Gaite: Middle-Class Women in Franco's Spain

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During Franco's dictatorship, particularly the two decades following the Civil War, Spanish society was caught in a rigid set of morals and manners. There were few who dared to subvert the prevalent social values either by humour or satire, and literature developed according to rather grim and outmoded standards. During these years, it was taken for granted that women were ideal mothers and wives, always ready to tend to the precious lives of the men in their charge.

The moral climate not withstanding, women writers began to challenge the patriarchal norms and made it clear that Spanish women writers had to be taken into account when writing the history of Spanish literature. As early as 1944, Carmen Laforet won a national literary prize with her novel, *Nada*. Soon afterwards, Carmen Conde, now a member of the Royal Academy of Language, published a long poem in 1947, Mujer sin Edén, in which Eve is shown as the primeval woman devoid of rights and words to express herself. Ana Maria Matute followed suit and used an adolescent girl, experiencing the war around her, as the narrator of her novels. Elena Quiroga and Carmen Martin Gaite started writing in the fifties about the pains and mores of women at the time. The style of these writers were merely factual but the tensions underneath revealed a more assertive role on the part of women.

In 1987, after writing many important novels, Martin Gaite published *Usos amorosos de la post-guerra española* (Love mores of the Spanish post-war period), a telling account of the delicate social situation of women and an analysis of the strategies of marriage in use for them at that time. The author argues that the choice to become nuns was the only decision women could really make in their lives, and

it was a way out of the narrow and limiting manners of that society. By taking this course, women were rendered free of the malevolence of the outside world and they became a model to be admired and honoured because of their transcendental sacrifice. Of course, nobody talked about life in the convent. Nuns became, so to say, dead to the world.

By unearthing and quoting documents of that time (speeches, newspaper articles, radio talks, surveys, books, and films), Martin Gaite outlines the stereotype of the woman that Spanish men were looking for: sweet, always smiling, with her mouth shut, a good cook, proficient at sewing and embroidering, with long hair, no trousers and, above all, an everlasting admirer of the male. The paragon of such a delicacy was, according to the mass media, Franco's wife: "muy mujer", a real woman, because of her passive attitude and her will for self-sacrifice.

The cult of the "Spanish" mother, exalted by popular singers and film makers of the system, was jeopardized in the late fifties by the pernicious invasion of American films and novels which immediately became tremendously popular. Official counterattacks were launched and progressively intensified in a vain attempt to keep the new fashion at bay. But it was education, the intellectual development of women which constituted the main target of such attacks. The president of the "Feminine Forces," a woman herself, did not hesitate to announce that "the vocation to study must not be encouraged lightly in women . . . our Association has promoted really feminine occupations (nursing, teaching, crafts) to redeem women from the difficult and tiring path of books". Because, after all, she continues, "women never discover anything: they lack that creative talent that God reserved for male intelligence; we can only interpret, according to our lights, what men have made".

An official paper published by the Ministry of Public Health in 1950 shows one more instance of the monolithic ideological position of the regime and the all-pervading male voice in the Spanish society ruled by Franco: "We agree with the notion of the idle damsel being transformed into a research companion. But it is precisely she who needs a protective hand to refrain her when a craving passion for knowledge starts to diminish her femininity and beautiful charm . . . After all if we had to choose,

we would prefer that silent woman who considers us as masters of her life and follows our lessons and advice with the humility of one who knows herself inferior in talent."

The best channels to disseminate this ideology were the girls' magazines. They were real guides to the strategies of marriage, showing how to be sly and to catch a "good party" meaning a "rich" one, and how to behave (not how to *be*) in order to secure a husband. A husband was as necessary socially and economically to Spanish women in the fifties as he was to Jane Austen's characters in the nineteenth century. These magazines convinced their readers of the impossibility of friendship between the two sexes. Given their urgent desires, males sought the indulgence of their impulses but despised the females who succumbed to them, because "there is an ideal woman to marry and an ideal woman not to marry". The answers given in a survey conducted among the famous movie stars of the period provide a good clue about the prevailing attitude. Asked how their wives should be, all the male stars agreed on the ideal pattern. Here are some examples: she should "consider her husband as the protective fence to defend her ingenuity from the dangers of this world"; she should "be a man's ideal private secretary, the one who knows his tastes and his chores, who is cultivated but discreet, showing her husband that he is still superior".

Things have obviously changed in Spain, both in social values and in literature. Although a novel like *Blanca y radiante* by Sara Suarez Solis still finds an audience in 1988 when talking about the miserable emotional life of the rich wife of the fifties, the motives for marriage have varied considerably and the views about women working away from home have also changed. An official survey of 1984 revealed that both men and women look for company in the first place when considering marriage. There is a wide range of tolerance toward working women depending on the age of the male. Men under 35 consider it normal that both sexes have a professional occupation and at the same time share the house chores; men over 35, however, consider this bad for family and society, and men over 60 think it is simply outrageous. In general, 75% of men would agree with the idea that women work outside the home provided these women remain single or have no children and 57% of the men would consider the notion if there were no unemployment in the country.

Against all odds and political impediments, women in Spain today are defining their place in society. The long list of women authors increases year after year together with the number of female readers and the social consideration of women in general. Adelaida Garcia Morales, Carmen Gómez Ojea, Rosa Montero, Lurdes Ortiz, Marta Pessarrodona, Soledad Puértolas and Montserrat Roig are only a few of those who continue the literary task outlined by Carmen Martin Gaite and her contemporaries.

Ouf. . . !

Lucie Lequin

Que dire d'autre quand depuis des mois, je suis à la recherche d'un peu d'oxygène. Après de nombreuses journées de seize heures, souvent sept jours par semaine, je me demande si j'ai obtenu un doctorat en administration, en art de la résistance ou vraiment en littérature.

Mes ami/e/s, ma famille savent que depuis l'enfance, j'ai le nez plongé dans un livre. Les mauvaises langues familiales prétendent que, très jeune, j'avais développé des stratégies de camouflage et que la lecture accompagnait presque toujours les tâches familiales; elles disent que, par souci du travail bien fait, j'exigeais toujours d'épousseter la porte fermée et toutes les pièces avaient des portes. J'étais d'une lenteur patente, mais acceptée par la famille. Que de livres j'ai ainsi dévorés, le chiffon à la main. Les mauvaises langues avaient raison. Mais déjà, je me préparais à mener de front au moins deux activités.

Cette complicité, je l'ai retrouvée lorsqu'en 1986, j'ai décidé de poursuivre mes études de doctorat. Sans l'encouragement de ma famille et de mes ami/e/s, la patience de mes enfants, l'appui des collègues à l'Institut, des étudiant/e/s et des membres de mon comité, de Maïr surtout, j'aurais manqué de courage et d'énergie. C'est cette complicité morale qui m'a donné la force d'allonger les journées, de multiplier les activités et de terminer.

Comment rappeler tout ce travail de recherche longtemps mûri, plusieurs fois remanié, sans parler de plaisir et de passion, car l'un des intérêts, voire l'un des charmes, de la fréquentation littéraire, c'est de pouvoir, au fil des ans, des décennies, regarder à nouveau, re-lire, dé-lire des oeuvres que l'on croyait avoir comprises, que l'on avait peut-être enchâssées dans une lecture sécurisante ou même classées de façon définitive après un premier contact. Re-lire, dé-lire permettent de découvrir

de nouvelles modulations, d'examiner au plus près des détails et de reconnaître le caractère essentiellement labile de toute critique, la mienne aussi.

Depuis longtemps déjà, j'ai commencé à observer les modes de représentation des personnages féminins chez les romancières et romanciers québécois. Chaque année, des étudiant/e/s, le plus souvent masculins, posent la fameuse question sur le «matriarcat québécois»; d'autres, des femmes surtout, se demandent pourquoi le point de vue masculin domine. Pourtant, lorsqu'on examine autrement la littérature québécoise, les questions se transforment. On s'interroge alors sur le peu d'importance des femmes dans les oeuvres d'hommes, sur leur absence, leurs qualités stéréotypées. On découvre dans les oeuvres de femmes, des personnages féminins en mouvement, en quête de leur autonomie. On s'étonne de rencontrer des femmes inconnues, Louise Genest(1) dans le roman du même nom, Julienne dans *L'ampoule d'or*(2), Didi Lantagne, dans *La chair décevante*(3), et bien d'autres; les femmes connues, Rose-Anna(4), Joséphine Plouffe(5), se manifestent sous un autre jour. Les différences apparaissent entre le point de vue masculin et le point de vue féminin dans la représentation des femmes, mais aussi dans la texture humaine et sociale de l'oeuvre. Les questions se multiplient. Le corpus le plus étudié est-il justifié? Le sort réservé aux oeuvres méconnues est-il mérité?

Pour répondre à ces questions, j'ai choisi d'inventorier(6) un corpus limité afin de pouvoir inclure et faire connaître des oeuvres peu lues, parfois inconnues. Le but premier de mon étude était uniquement de dresser la taxinomie des images de femmes, dessinées par des femmes dans des oeuvres dites majeures. Mais je me suis vite rendu compte de la nécessité de re-lire l'ensemble du corpus d'une période donnée, car les images de femmes dans une oeuvre dite mineure peuvent aussi générer la différence, indiquer des pistes et parfois éclairer un roman souvent analysé.

Pour effectuer cette re-lecture, j'ai choisi les romans féminins d'après la Deuxième Guerre mondiale (1945-1951) et, pour me permettre de comparer et de mettre en valeur les innovations de plusieurs écrivaines, j'ai retenu une vingtaine de romans masculins.

Cette comparaison permet de mettre en doute le monolithisme apparent et laisse la représentation hétérogène des personnages féminins se dire. J'ai étudié et comparé la représentation des femmes par le biais de l'individuation, de l'amour et de la maternité. J'ai tenté de comprendre pourquoi dans l'ensemble, les romanciers ne disent que la mère, alors que les romancières dessinent des femmes plurielles, sans les confiner dans la seule maternité. J'ai retracé le parcours de quelques femmes insoumises, des sujètes en devenir qui refusent le modèle, la norme.

Mon étude veut aussi retrouver comment les romancières perçoivent leur société. À travers des coordonnées telles que la topographie, la mobilité, la religion, les classes sociales, le travail rémunéré, la présence des immigré/e/s, j'ai interrogé l'époque dite de «grande noirceur». J'ai constaté que, dans les romans féminins, s'élaborait déjà le prélude d'une Révolution tranquille au féminin.

Glaner les images de femmes met en lumière la juxtaposition de deux mondes presque étaches, l'un féminin, l'autre masculin. Le premier, plus ouvert aux changements, plus lié au présent, du moins celui des femmes; l'autre, plus introspectif, trop parfois, encore mystifié par l'idéologie traditionnelle, incapable de se dépouiller des anciennes idées sur la femme et sur l'homme, sur le pays, tout en rêvant de transformer la société sans avoir appris à poser de nouvelles questions; un monde souvent mortifère.

Cette séparation découle d'enjeux sociaux différents. Dans les romans féminins, l'enjeu est d'une part la délimitation de l'espace public et de l'espace privé à propos du travail et de la maternité et, d'autre part, les conditions de la prise de la parole par les femmes. Dans les romans masculins, l'enjeu est la personne et ses droits individuels.

Les auteur/e/s qui circulent entre l'univers féminin et l'univers masculin peuvent décanter les stéréotypes sexuels. Leurs personnages deviennent alors des adultes capables d'agir sur leur réalité sans annihiler leur «moi». Les hommes apprennent «la langue»(7) des femmes et peuvent alors commencer à leur parler; les femmes élargissent leur territoire et posent ainsi, dans le public, le point de vue des femmes.

Encore précaires, peu écoutés, cette symbiose du féminin et du masculin et ce nouveau désir de compréhension réciproque n'en poursuivent pas moins leurs chemins vers la lumière préparant ainsi le terrain pour une écriture plus ouvertement féministe, plus militante.

Les écrivaines d'après-guerre inscrivent dans la patience leurs désirs de changements et, sans doute partageaient-elles avec Gabrielle Roy une esthétique de la douce démonstration:

Cela ne donnait rien d'affirmer, ce qui comptait c'était de faire voir, de faire aimer. . .(8)

Étudier la représentation des femmes dans les romans québécois d'après-guerre engage une réflexion plus large sur l'ensemble de la littérature québécoise et déborde sur l'étude de l'hétérogène, concept qui permet de re-lire, de ré-interpréter, de repérer la différence et de mesurer les écarts vis-à-vis de la norme, de l'idéologie dominante. Au terme de mon étude, je crois aussi que revoir l'histoire de la littérature québécoise par le biais des représentations sexuelles permettrait d'en saisir autrement l'évolution.

Tous les concepts, quand on y pense, sont à re-découvrir à partir d'un regard féministe et hétérogène. Il faudrait multiplier les inventaires, les études d'ensemble, les analyses détaillées. N'est-ce pas là un projet enrichissant et enthousiasmant? Je sens déjà que les journées vont de nouveau s'allonger. . .

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Patterns not our Own: Women of Colour, and the Concept of Exclusion

Sherene Razack

Exclusion is one of the new buzz words in feminist circles. An exclusive perspective in feminist scholarship presents a reality which is assumed to be universal to all women. As Elizabeth Spelman argues in *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought*, published in 1988, the view that all women share a core of oppression distorts and minimizes the realities of women on the margins.

In her brilliantly written and incisive analysis of orientalism, Rana Kabbani begins her book *Europe's Myths of Orient* with a quote from Gabriel Garcia Marquez: "The interpretation of our reality through patterns not our own serves only to make us ever more unknown, ever less true, ever more solitary" (Kabbani, p.x). The work of Kabbani, and a host of writers from the 'third world' deal with the ways in which the west, and colonizing countries in particular, have exiled the east into "an irretrievable state of 'otherness'" (Kabbani, p.6). These writers have much to offer those of us unhappy with the problems of exclusion and with the universalizing of otherness recently identified in much feminist theory and practice.

It was Simone de Beauvoir who first gave feminists the vocabulary of otherness with which to understand the banishment of women into the realm of the *en-soi*, a place where we stand trapped in nature. Western feminists found it exhilarating, if at times a little cumbersome for those of us not philosophically inclined, to pinpoint how woman had been made in the image of everything man hoped he was not. For de Beauvoir, man was transcendence; woman immanence. He was reason, she, desire, and so on and so on with dualities until we were cast so relentlessly into a separate and subordinate sphere that it became difficult to see the routes of escape. Feminists criticize de Beauvoir on several scores now but rarely do we let our

criticisms diminish the originality of her insight that for man, woman is the other, the paradigm, perhaps, for all forms of domination.

What is so unsettling in the works of scholars like Kabbani is a parallel insistence and meticulous proof that for the west, the east is the other. Otherness, whatever its context, hits home. Feminists do not like to do to others what has so universally been done to women. Kabbani has something else to offer us besides a little guilt that we, western and westernized women, have participated in colonialist discourse and in the objectification of peoples of other cultures.

In *Europe's Myth's of Orient*, we see *how* a region of the world, a culture, a religion (in this case Islam) has come to symbolize everything westerners desperately wished to affirm they were not. Beginning in Victorian England, we learn how necessary it was to imperial domination that the west saw the east as alien. Victorians worked hard to promote, through text and paintings, the image of eastern lands as places of lascivious sensuality and inherent violence. The east became a place where European men could find fulfilment for their wildest fantasies of domination. Not surprisingly, Eastern women figured prominently in this scenario. Eastern women were veiled, sensual beings forcibly confined to harems where every manner of sexual perversion reigned free. It is this same process of otherness cast in a gender specific fantasy that Malek Alloula identifies so well in *The Colonial Harem*, a biting exposé of early twentieth century French postcards of Algerian women. As the images of the colonial harem indicate, the essence of the colonialist gaze was a particular "stereotype that is so tenaciously attached to the bodies of women": the stereotype of woman as sex. (Alloula, p.5) In the Frenchman's pictorial version of *les algeriennes*, one sees veiled women, breasts fully exposed, peering out of cages.

Imposing European norms, forging images of the east as alien and therefore deserving of domination are not practices confined to the Victorians. Kabbani devotes the better part of a chapter to V.S. Naipaul, the Trinidadian writer whose own brown skin and 'third world' nationality did not protect him from seeing India as "an area of darkness," chaos, and ignorance and from finding only negativity in his travels through the Islamic world. In Kabbani's words, Naipaul's Islamic world

is peopled by "diminished dolts" (Kabbani, p.135), fundamentalists, and women who evoke in Naipaul a "peasant or nomadic longing." Above all, it is a world Naipaul came expecting to find, fed as he was on a steady diet of colonialist images.

Have western feminists escaped the perils of the dominant discourse in which we find ourselves? (The 'we' of western feminists refers to feminists schooled in western institutions and systems of thought, for this is where we learn the lessons of exclusion, as Naipaul's case illustrates so well.) Clearly not. This is the answer one finds if one reads what eastern feminists, and women of colour in the west have to say about their exclusion from feminist theory and practice. To highlight only a few such criticisms, we have only to recall the anger of Egyptian feminists towards Angela Davis who visited Egypt and whom they expected to 'do the standard western thing' and write only of cliterectomies. Although Davis herself tried hard to escape this mold, much western writing on the third world has drawn a picture of 'third world' women as passive objects mired, as de Beauvoir would say, in immanence. A western feminist understanding of women in the 'third world,' Chandra Mohanty suggests, has generally turned on a notion that such women have no material or ideological specificities of their own. Similarly, Marnia Lazreg astutely notes that feminist theory seems to lose its critical edge when third world women are its subjects. Rarely does one find a critique of colonialist discourse for example, and rarer still an examination of how that discourse has affected *western* feminist thinking.

Indeed, in some feminist quarters there is considerable antipathy to the notions that women of other races, countries, classes experience their gender in a historically specific way and that white women are as implicated in the ideology of western dominance as are white men. In the classroom, some students cling dearly to old colonialist notions of eastern women. Among professors, resistance comes in the form of panic—"there is simply no way I am going to understand *these* women's specificities enough to teach it." Community activists fear that introducing a more complex notion of gender than the one which has as its norm the white western female will only result in the weakening of the feminist thrust into such institutions as unions, for example. They argue that affirmative action plans targeted toward

women and minorities will result in few gains for women, a point of view one can only hold if the category "woman" has nothing to do with the problems of racist barriers to equality.

Instead of resisting, lacerating ourselves with the truth, or feeling fearful as Kabbani suggests Naipaul is (that he may be sucked back into his own painful and chaotic colonial past), we should simply plunge into the task of reconstruction. What would an inclusive feminism look like and what would it cost us? We have the warning from Elizabeth Spelman about the perils of additive analysis. This means that if we keep the notion that sexism is somehow an experience apart from racism, then we are saying that sexism must first be understood (and struggled against) in its most uncontaminated form: the sexism experienced by white middle class women. In this view, Spelman argues, all the other isms are simply grafted on to sexism. The idea of a gender "uncontaminated" by race means that women of colour are asked to carve themselves into women on the one hand, and 'coloured' beings on the other. And, significantly, it also means that white women need not examine their own race-based privileges. As Spelman emphasizes, "the racial awareness of Whites shows up not simply in what they think about Blacks but in what they think about themselves as Whites" (Spelman, p.105). There is simply no one experience of gender oppression, although women are universally oppressed.

Does giving up the idea of a universal woman threaten our fragile gains as women? At least one thing is clear: we don't have the same things to gain or to lose by the dethroning. As we wend our way through the revisions of course outlines and papers, as we struggle through the feelings of irritation, insecurity and impatience, let us begin to name what we each confront in redefining the limits of our feminism. For my part, as a woman with a colonial past quite similar to Naipaul's, I have a pressing need to decipher what is and is not "a colonialist gaze." It has for me, as for Malek Alloula, an Algerian man, something of the quality of an exorcism since the gaze has too often been turned on me. It is like a devil that has distorted and imprisoned me. Before I can set off on the path to world transformation, I will need to rid myself of it.

Working through my own specificities is more than a private pilgrimage. If the personal is political, and my feminist fellow travellers still travel burdened by their own histories, we probably cannot be *compagnons de route*. The despair this gives rise to is a familiar one. I felt exactly the same way while waiting, often in vain, for men I cared for to *see* sexism and their role in it. I am sure, too, that there are women waiting for me to *see* my own privileges. I only hope they hang around long enough for me to make my way to where they are standing.

The path toward an inclusive feminism is long and arduous. There is perhaps less sense of the direction in which we must go than where we must not. Like travellers, we should, at the very least, suspect the ideological baggage of our various histories, the images we bring to the far away places we visit. Only then are we open to dialogue, to hear, and to decenter ourselves as the norm.

(I am grateful to my colleagues at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute for their open discussions of these ideas and in particular to Homa Hoodfar and Martha Saunders for introducing me to the works mentioned here.)

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Women in the Lead, and Other Reversals: A Visualization Reversing the Power Between the Sexes, and More

Elsa Schieder

A student mentioned that she routinely visualized the newspapers with the sex of the government figures switched. So far, she went on to say, she hadn't found any men willing to try the exercise.

The following visualization, meant for both women and men, was sparked by her comment.

Why do it? No matter how much we object to sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, etc., it's hard to not take the world for granted, or to be aware of the extent to which we're affected by the social structures.

So here's an exercise to encourage wondering and action, and to make the world more visible by making it seem less natural.

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If you like, close your eyes for a few moments and relax.

Now imagine that you look at the newspaper. As usual, almost all the pictures on the front page are of women. A world government summit: all women, with the exception of Mike Thatcher (who's more womanly, as everyone knows, than any woman). The government figures, the business leaders, the film directors, the people considered worth writing about. Of course most are women.

You turn to the religion section. A whole range of goddess religions—and a brief write-up of a man who claims you don't have to be able to gestate life within you to be a vessel for the divine creative force.

(You don't bother reading that article. Or that's the only article you read. You bring it up in several conversations that day.)

To jog your mind, you take an English class. Of course the writers are women—though there is a token male writer (to keep the men happy; they're being so difficult these days).

(You immediately decide to skip that book. Or you read that book first, are convinced it's one of the greatest works ever written, make all your friends read it, and do your paper on it.)

Everywhere you turn, women are shown as the natural leaders, and are considered more creative and caring. Men—except for the weirdos who believe in masculism—value women more than themselves.

Government—that takes a woman's touch. Child care—that takes a woman's touch. Literature—that takes a woman's touch. The pay is high because these jobs are intrinsically more valuable.

As some attention to mundane crassness is needed (in construction and surgery, for example), men get to do those jobs and to be poorly paid for them. After all, it isn't women's fault that men are too logical and aggressive.

Engineers get minimum wage. The "math gene" in considered a genetic defect. So is the war gene.

Of course you know that the occasional woman is drawn to men's jobs (though only the goddess knows why!). But being women—and intuitive and creative despite everything—they end up being the leaders in even those professions.

Only intuitive knowing is valued. Few people (meaning women) have any interest in linear thinking. Laws are based, not on individual rights, but on what

feels right to legislators. (This is not very different from current reality, though at least in this case the situation is acknowledged.)

(In the newspaper, the main headline reads: "Summit leaders unsure what feels right to them.")

The word "she" refers to all people, but especially women. Note that he does form part of she. Similarly, the word "woman" refers to all people. Again, note that man is a sub-part of woman. Neanderthal woman. The history of woman. Woman and nature.

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In such a world, what would non-sexism mean to you?

Would you care about non-sexist language?

Would you insist that men were just as nurturing as women, that the fault lay in socialization? Or would you chant, "Warlike is wonderful." "Brothers are doing it for themselves." "Manpower."

What would it be like for you, walking down a dark street at night?

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It's easy to do variations of this exercise, for example for race and sexual orientation. I'll do a few.

Race. Being colorful, as is widely accepted (though fewer people will say it out loud these days), goes with being creative and intuitive and spontaneous. The benefits of color: easier access to everything, being more valued, being part of the in group. Most TV shows and films are by and about people of color; so are most other role models. Who wouldn't want to be colorful?

Anyone with a drop of white blood is white—and discriminated against. (She may look native, but what if the kids turn out white?) Alternatively, anyone with at least a drop of colored blood is okay—and some darker whites try to pass, though far fewer since the White Power movement.

(Visualize the newspaper once more. Note that the government figures are women of color. What races were they, for you, originally?)

Sexual orientation. Same-sex couples are the only truly acceptable ones. After all, as everyone knows, similarities attract. And children are such a handful that they need two mothers. Heterosexuality—that would encourage women to spend time with men, and women might be contaminated by male ways of being. So, heterosexual flings are encouraged for conception, and lesbian/gay relationships—the natural birth control method—ensure that all pregnancies are wanted ones, and that women and men stay apart.

(Visualize the summit leaders once more: all, except for Mike Thatcher, are with women partners. Absolutely none is with an opposite-sex partner. That would be just too much for most people to take.)

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In such a world, what might you be like? How would you figure out what's right for you?

What would strike you as unnatural? A white running for prime minister?

What abilities would you value?

What might it be like for you, trying to be unprejudiced and to create an equal opportunity society? Would you want to concentrate on one form of discrimination? Which one?

Could you be low-status and not defensive about it? High status and not matronizing?

Could you do this reversal visualization at all? If so, what was central for you?

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One final comment. Note how all the rankings reinforce each other: all the one-down groups tend to be associated with the same qualities. In other words, discriminations intersect. So, working against one discrimination touches, in some way, on many.

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Now back to the current unnatural world.

Reply to Berkeley Kaite

Sheila Mason-Mullett

The last Le Bulletin/Newsletter (Vol 10, no 1) contains a review by Berkeley Kaite of *Feminist Perspectives: Essays on Method and Morals*, the book I co-edited with Lorraine Code and Christine Overall. It also contains an article by Peta Tancred-Sheriff advocating that feminist reviewers delineate "where we are coming from, not only intellectually, but also politically and affectively" (p.33).

In replying to the review by Kaite I will attempt, despite a number of strong misgivings, to delineate 'where I am coming from' and why I have misgivings about doing that.

Kaite praises the book for its organization, style, and scholarship and gives a concise account of several of the articles in the book, including my own. So far so good. But when Kaite turns to criticism of two of the articles, I feel a sense of dismay. Not because a review should be uncritical, but because these particular criticisms result in a misrepresentation of valuable insights in both articles, which, in my view, were the best in the book.

The first article in question, entitled 'Pornographic Harms', by Jacqueline Davies contains a valuable insight about a way of describing the harm of pornography. The basic idea is this: when we attempt to claim that pornography harms women by inciting men to violence against women, it is very difficult to establish a convincing empirical causal connection between the experience, by men, of viewing pornographic material and the incidence of violent sexual behavior. And, unless you can show that certain actions cause harm, you cannot find grounds on which to legislate against these actions (the sale of pornographic material). Davies' insight is that we can see the harm of pornography if we treat it as a discourse which is constitutive of human identity, i.e. which tells us what it is to be a woman. As such this is a discourse which is about women but from which women are excluded. And

it is well known that to be defined by others for their purposes without being consulted about the definition is to be disempowered or, more strongly, to be deprived of full humanity.

> The name feminists give to this process of limiting what a person can be by predetermining how her or his behavior or appearance is to be interpreted is 'objectification'. It defines me from without, according to someone else's needs, desires and intentions, before I have a chance to exert any control over how I am determined or defined as a subject, i.e. to have my own needs, desires, and intentions reflected in public interpretations of who or what I am. (*Feminist Perspectives*, p.137)

Kaite makes no mention of this point, but focuses, instead, upon the issue of deconstruction. Kaite has a series of criticisms of Davies:

i. "Davies reifies reality as against representation, as though symbols and representations are somehow unreal (or subversive of the real)."

Reply: This criticism is simply false. Davies' point is precisely the point Kaite claims she has denied. Pornography, in Davies' view, constructs sexuality and sexual identity. It is for that very reason that it is harmful. It deprives women of a 'voice' in their own self-description. In pornography (and in advertisements) the definitions of women are made by and for those in power, not by and for women.

ii. Kaite continues:

> One is frequently left wondering if those espousing the humanist, feminist position on pornography (which in this article, as with many, is left undefined) have actually looked at pornographic magazines and films. If they did they would have to acknowledge that the photographs are replete with signifiers of masculinity. Davies writes that 'only' images or signs of women are exchanged.(pp.40-41)

Reply: When Davies writes 'only images or signs of women are exchanged' she is drawing a contrast with the discusssion by anthropologist Levy-Strauss of the practice, in some societies, of marriage as a process of exchange among men, in which women are literally exchanged. Davies' point is that in pornography women themselves are not actually bought and sold along with other material possessions, rather symbols are bought and sold, but the effect is still oppression because women do not participate in this exchange as sign-generators.

iii. Kaite continues the criticism:

> But the questions are begging: is 'woman' immediately recognizable? is this grounded in biology? what is a sign of a woman or feminity? how is biology, femaleness and feminity signified or communicated? how do we know that what we are looking at is a woman? (As some authors have argued, the woman in pornographic imagery speaks a masculine vocabulary; as well, men, or fragments of their bodies, frequently dominate hard-core photographs. This complicates the purely phallic argument that banishes all contradiction from the discourse/photograph.) (p.41).

Before I reply to this let me tell you 'where I am coming from'. Two places: first: twenty five years of doing philosophy which very often (I won't hazard a guess as to how often) produces elaborate quibbles and hair-splitting arguments that detract entirely from any possible down-to-earth, plain common-sensical view. Second: a feminized consciousness acutely sensitive to the fact that much 'common-sense' in our society, at least, is grossly misogynist and therefore must be deconstructed.

Reply: There are occasions in which questions like those raised by Kaite are appropriate. Some ideas of femininity and some of the ideas that are associated with being a woman are just stupid. And I, like many others, have suffered at having to try to squeeze myself into these narrow, disabling parameters, and suffered for having failed to fit as well. Either way. But nothing in Davies' article requires such deconstruction. The uncertainty about what we are looking at, the suggestion that

it is a masculine vocabulary, that men dominate the photographs, that it is not grounded in biology, these are all completely compatible with the Davies' claim that women are not presented (however bizzare and ambiguous the presentation) as signifiers. So Davies does not have to deconstruct all those terms to make her point, and, to complain of the lack of deconstruction without presenting her point misleads the reader about her work.

Finally, I take issue with the suggestion that Davies is producing a 'purely phallic argument' insofar as she fails to identify contradictions in the discourse of pornography. Why does this bother me so much? I really value clarity. I think Davies has done a fine job of clarifying a difficult issue. Does that make me 'phallic'? I appreciate deconstruction when it unmasks the power relations embedded in our language, i.e. when it produces clarity and liberates me from confusion. But I recoil from the epithet 'phallic'.

iv. Kaite continues:

> The concepts Davies employs are highly abstract (object, woman, sexuality) and not grounded in symbolic (i.e. social and historical) imagery (p.41).

Reply: (quibblingly perhaps) Davies uses the word 'objectification' not 'object' and she explains what she means by the term. As for the terms 'woman' and 'sexuality' I want to say that there are many contexts of language use in which we use terms which we cannot define and/or which we do not choose to deconstruct. Davies' articles creates such a context by focusing on a point which would be obscured by the search for precision in definition or by deconstruction.

Where I am coming from: I have been stopped dead in my tracks too many times by philosophers insisting on a precise definition where none was available. And I have heard far too many complaints by those who would support feminist endeavors but are alienated by the failure/refusal of these feminists to communicate in plain language. Let me put it more strongly: it is an occupational hazard of feminist

philosophers not to be understood by ordinary folk and I struggle with this almost daily with students, colleagues, friends, neighbours, acquaintances, relatives, and other feminists. As a result of all this 'communication breakdown' I try to select terms and modes of discourse that will facilitate the dialogue.

The second article that I worry about is the (brilliant)(and important) defense of Carol Gilligan by Barbara Houston in "Gilligan and the Politics of a Distinctive Women's Morality". The concern that Kaite has is that Houston defends Gilligan for trusting women's descriptions of their view of morality. Gilligan is criticized by John Broughton who says that Gilligan 'by limiting women's morality to the conscious conflict-free sphere. . . hides from sight women's collusion in their own oppression.' (*Feminist perspectives*, p.172).

I am very sympathetic to one insight of the Psychoanalytic tradition; namely, that we (human beings in patriarchal capitalism, or otherwise describable) are good at self-deception. So I perk up when I see allusions to this. And I agree with Kaite when she says "we often deceive ourselves: we can never know (because we don't have one) our essential selves." (p.42). But let me introduce the tension she recommends. Yes we deceive ourselves. Yes we do not have an essential core self which can be known by introspection. And, further, we construct ourselves through social practices and through discourse associated with those practices. But/and, when Gilligan describes the anguish that women express in their attempts to articulate a suppressed moral vision (see her description of Amy) are we to doubt that too? There are times to doubt and times not to doubt.

Houston makes two points here: i.) what we mean by morality is largely the conscious values and beliefs that we can articulate, and ii.) it is a very salient feature of the context of Gilligan's work and of Houston's work that women are rendered invisible, discredited and undermined to the point of often doubting what they know to be true. Gilligan, Houston and myself as co-editor of the book, believe that we are in a particular social-historical context in which it is not such a bad idea to listen to women and to give them/us (whoever, of course, will ultimately be included in the purview of the term, . . .) the benefit of the doubt.

What gets lost in Kaite's review is Houston's main point:

> my remarks in defence of Gilligan are not so much a defence of (her) theory and her expression of our voice, rather they represent a commitment to her enterprise, the enterprise of trying to describe how women themselves understand their own morality. And now my own politics becomes clear. In the face of these considered criticisms, I advocate the politics of persistence.(*Feminist Perspectives*,p.185).

I think Kaite is right to advocate "a true appreciation of difference in the service of cooperation." (p. 42). One step in that direction is to agree to use different tools of analysis for different contexts. When there are valuable insights that can be made in unproblematized ordinary language, let's make them in that language. When unproblematized ordinary language disempowers people, then let's deconstruct it. I think we have to choose our contexts with a view to empowering one another. Sometimes feminism and post-modernism pull in opposite directions. When they do I put my energy into the former and not the latter.

Denise Lemieux et Lucie Mercier, *Les femmes au tournant du siècle, 1880-1940: âge de la vie, maternité et quotidien.* Québec, Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1989.

À travers des souvenirs, des chroniques et des autobiographies (sources principales), Denise Lemieux et Lucie Mercier évoquent, dans ce premier tome, le cycle de la vie des femmes au tournant du siècle. Un deuxième tome examinera le cycle de la vie à l'époque récente. Les auteures veulent découvrir les interactions entre les modèles du passé et du présent.

Cette première partie se divise en dix chapitres. Le premier chapitre explore les transformations historiques du cycle de vie individuel. Les notions de "temps destin" et de "temps géré" y sont analysées. Tenant compte à la fois de l'état des connaissances et de leurs sources principales, elles analysent horizontalement et verticalement leurs données afin de montrer les transformations du cycle de la vie et le passage du temps destin au temps géré. Elles confrontent leurs sources et tentent d'en dégager des constantes.

L'étude du départ de la maison, de la sortie du couvent, des sociabilités de la jeunesse, du choix du conjoint, de l'amour et, ici et là, de quelques insoumissions retrace l'histoire des jeunes filles à qui les auteures consacrent quatre chapitres. Au fond, derrière ces thèmes se dessine un but unique, le mariage ou plutôt la maternité au sein du mariage. De 1880 à 1940, l'attitude face à la grossesse et à l'accouchement change. Le secret de la grossesse est peu à peu levé; par contre, l'accouchement s'entoure encore de silence, de tabous, surtout lorsqu'il y a déjà d'autres enfants. Enfin, la grossesse, au nom du modernisme, échappe de plus en plus à la parentèle et devient une affaire d'autorité publique (médecins, mouvements hygiénistes, etc.). Un nouveau souci de la santé des mères commence à se développer, mais simultanément un nouveau modèle de la femme au foyer, de la ménagère idéale, de la femme "pilier de l'ordre sociale" marque le quotidien des femmes-adultes-mères. Bourgeoises et femmes du peuple ne partagent pas les mêmes tâches matérielles,

mais elles ont en commun cette responsabilité morale et spirituelle. Les cinq derniers chapitres éclairent les itinéraires variés des femmes adultes.

"Cette anthropologie historique du souvenir" permet de saisir le vécu de *certaines* familles québécoises. Elle montre comment souvent les femmes appartiennent simultanément à plus d'un univers culturel.

Travail de démystification et de reconstruction du passé, cet ouvrage fait place à la mémoire et au subjectif. Cependant, l'on aurait aimé que les auteures poussent davantage l'exploration de cette subjectivité: qui a écrit, pourquoi, pour qui, qui a eu le temps d'écrire? Des silences ne sont pas explorés, notamment tout ce qui touche à la sexualité et à la surveillance. Il eût été intéressant de s'interroger sur l'intériorisation de l'obéissance, de la domination afin de relativiser davantage la notion de destinée. Il aurait aussi fallu rappeler que même dans l'autobiographie, la censure peut jouer. Néanmoins, par cet ouvrage, Denise Lemieux et Lucie Mercier ont fait avancer l'histoire des femmes.

Lucie Lequin

Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

Paula Gunn Allen (ed.), *Spider Woman's Granddaughters*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.

The *Sacred Hoop* is part feminist Native American history and part literary criticism. Throughout both sections is the implicit knowledge that Native Americans face physical and cultural genocide. Gunn Allen chronicles the ways in which colonization has oppressed Native Americans, focusing specifically on the challenges posed to women, as the dissolution of ritual traditions turns the tribes away from gynocentric, egalitarian, ritual-based social systems. Recognizing that western studies of Native American literature suffer from ethnocentric and androcentric biases, Gunn Allen has taken it upon herself to lay the groundwork for a better understanding of Native American literature and traditions. She reclaims the tradition of the "Mother" and "Grandmother" who took many forms other than the trivialized "fertility goddess" of Western anthropological interpretations. These feminine traditions embody the "creatix" who had the power to maintain the harmony of the universe—the Sacred Hoop—to create and transform as well as give birth to.

Gunn Allen also establishes the ways in which Western literary traditions differ from those of Native Americans. Through song, ceremony, legend, and tale, tribal societies express their shared reality, encompassing the whole of the people in the harmony of the community. Since western literary traditions are more focused on individual self-expression, Gunn Allen finds it necessary to re-establish the meanings of ceremony, ritual, myth, and harmony. Although Native American literature discusses and reflects both the community and the harmony of the universe, it also deals with the opposite: colonization has led to alienation, helplessness, and isolation from the surrounding culture and society. Despite its contemporary themes, Native American literature remains traditional due to its efforts at empowering the people and helping them to come to terms with the world.

If *The Sacred Hoop* is the theory, *Spider Woman's Granddaughters* is the practice. The traditions and histories discussed in *The Sacred Hoop* are articulated

and exemplified in this collection of traditional tales, biographies, and contemporary stories. These writings do not follow individualistic or conflict-centered Western canons, but a common understanding which arises from the ritual tradition shared by members of a tribal unit. These stories document a 500 year old war and the consequences of defeat. By maintaining the connections between daily life and tribal harmony, these writings are about transformations—not only the loss of the ability and right to control personal and community life, but also the development of a new strength to endure.

In this context, *Spider Woman's Granddaughters* consists of tribal women's literature—not "women's literature" in the sense of the term used by contemporary feminists. The writers are not so much women as Native American women, women at war. *Spider Woman's Granddaughters* is a collection of what Gunn Allen calls "women's war stories."

Although Gunn Allen's scholarship regarding the history of Native American women and Native American literature is impressive, she makes several questionable claims. Gunn Allen credits traditional Native American culture exclusively for concepts such as co-operation, harmony, and respect, which many western feminists are currently reformulating to solve human worldwide problems. More controversial is Gunn Allen's reaffirmation of the importance of women to be and to create "background." It is doubtful that in a contemporary, non-tribal society, women's use of backdoor power alone could solve the world's (and women's) problems. In this sense, Gunn Allen falls prey to the ethnocentric behaviour she criticizes in western feminist and scholars, as she tries to impose traditional Native American gender roles onto contemporary western women.

Debra Aubin

Micheline Plasse et Carolle Simard, édis., *Gérer au Féminin.* Montréal: Éditions Agence d'Arc inc., 1989.

En Juin 1988 se tient à Montréal, un colloque qui a pour thème la gestion au féminin. Micheline Plasse et Carolle Simard, toutes deux participantes affiliées à l'UQAM, proposent alors de réunir les textes des ateliers et discussions de cette rencontre en un ouvrage intitulé *Gérer au Féminin.* Grâce à cette fidèle retranscription, il nous est donc possible de prendre connaissance des nombreux sujets abordés au colloque sur la relation des femmes au milieu très masculin de la gestion en entreprise privée ou publique. Le livre nous permet ainsi de découvrir les différents thèmes reliés à cette question et de suivre le débat. Parmis les thèmes les plus importants traités au colloque, il faut mentionner la relation de pouvoir, l'accès aux postes de cadres et les caractéristiques principales des femmes gestionnaires.

Mais c'est sans doute aux questions de fond du sujet que le livre rend le plus justice. En effet, les auteures réussissent à faire ressortir les points centraux de débat: Existe-t-il vraiment une gestion qui soit spécifiquement féminine? Les femmes sont-elles ou peuvent-elles vraiment être plus humaines que leurs collègues masculins?

A ces questions, malheureusement, le livre/colloque apporte peu de réponses. Bien sûr, les présentations et discussion permettent d'identifier les difficultés majeures rencontrées par la plupart des femmes dans leur quête de pouvoir administratif; la double charge ou le syndrôme des superfemmes, la quasi-inexistence des réseaux de femmes gestionnaires et la résistance masculine. Mais à ces problèmes bien peu de solution sont offertes si ce n'est l'exemple de femmes qui, elles, ont réussies. Toutefois, ces témoignages de femmes gestionnaires connues, comme celui de Louise Roy, tendent à confondre les arguments du débat en présentant leur situation comme représentative du système en général.

Il serait cependant irréaliste de s'attendre à ce qu'un collogue (et le livre qui en découle) dépasse le stade de la réflexion et proposent des solutions miracles aux problèmes complexes des femmes dans le monde de la gestion. En conclusion, mentionnons, comme il se doit, que le livre, malgré son manque de réponse, affiche un esprit d'optimisme rafraîchissant qui donne l'espoir d'un futur prometteur, un optimisme qui ne peut venir que de femmes qui prennent de plus en plus leur place parmi les gestionnaires de ce monde.

Christiane Savard

Christine Overall (ed.), *The Future of Human Reproduction.* Toronto: The Women's Press, 1989.

Susan E. Davis (ed.), *Women Under Attack: Victories, Backlash and the Fight for Reproductive Freedom.* Boston: South End Press, 1988.

Christine Overall has in the past written provocatively and thoughtfully on this subject (in *Ethics and Human Reproduction: A Feminist Analysis* [1987], as well as in other articles), presenting her study of the situation in an original, intriguing and intelligent fashion. That this collection to which she lends her talents lacks the organizational strength and sense of direction previously demonstrated is, therefore, somewhat of a disappointment. The compilation tends to be repetitive and, although liberally sprinkled with wonderfully memorable turns of phrase, seems to lack a core premise.

The book claims to be the first collection of works to examine reproduction and reproductive technologies within the Canadian context. It is gratifying to have a Canadian perspective published on this critical subject rather than having to once again "make do" with the ubiquitous American experience. Although mention of specific Canadian cases may be all too brief and rudimentary—with the exception of Sandra Rodgers' concise and eminently readable examination of the 1988 Morgentaler Supreme Court decision—an attempt has at least been made to tell the Canadian story. What jars slightly is the fact that often the focus with respect to legal or medical services and/or practices is Ontario-centered and doesn't reflect the diverse reality of Canada. Readers of "Canadian" works must surely be familiar with that particular tendency given the frequency with which it occurs, and so here too it will be forgiven, if only grudgingly.

Despite these surface weaknesses, the book represents, a quick read that is both comprehensible and informative. The case for approaching reproductive technologies with suspicion is made with conviction and clarity. Individual contributors are adept at conveying their particular concerns, elaborating on specific issues or examples of reproductive technologies in such a way that the reader is provided with

a reasonably comprehensive overview of the subject from legal, social, and political perspectives. The book is weak in establishing the primacy of the issue of reproductive freedom. Almost all contributors touch upon the necessity for reproductive autonomy, yet only Christine Overall points out that a further elaboration of the feminist vision(s) of what this might mean is still required.

The authors apparently agree that a woman should be entitled to make her own decisions with respect to her own body. Yet none crosses that treacherous line of how reproductive freedom for individual women can conflict with the interests of others. While there is a marked sensitivity to the fact that reproduction as envisioned by the medical community and the legal world, accounts only to privilege for some at the expense of others, certain other disturbing assumptions are left unquestioned. Among them, the apparent acceptance of the notion that "health" is a universally agreed upon state. Such acceptance leads the authors into the mine field of claiming that although aborting fetuses on the basis of gender is a reprehensible act, to do so because a fetus is "deformed" is reasonable. A further weakness is the omission of an in-depth exploration of issues of race and class as they intersect gender. In Canadian society it seems obvious that there is a story to be told to this end—perhaps from a native perspective or from that of rural women—to broaden the scope of the discussion and heighten our awareness of the range of experiences to be found here.

As Overall points out in her introduction, no book can be all things to all readers. *The Future of Human Reproduction* begins to describe certain problems with the present approach to various medical, legal and social aspects of reproduction. It is a good starting place. Perhaps as a follow-up, these same contributors can present their vision of reproductive autonomy, thereby providing others with a base from which to conduct feminist analyses of the worth of reproductive technologies in the future.

In *Women Under Attack* produced by the New York-based CARASA organization (Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse), readers are treated to a brief, succinct precis of the status of reproduction issues in the United States. Although this self-described "pamphlet" provides few details, it does offer

a serviceable historical overview of the legal battle for reproductive freedom in the United States. Editor Susan Davis optimistically notes the somewhat puzzling fact that in certain regions, trends in birth control legislation are inconsistent with the objectives of patriarchy. She suggests that the measure of success in the fight of women for reproductive freedom is directly proportional to the degree of backlash raised by that fight. Freedom of choice in abortion is still cited as the rallying cry that is the crux—symbolically if not substantively—of the fight for reproductive freedom, all the more now that it involves new technological interventions. This is not an assessment of the ethics of reproductive matters, but rather a call to action to those who would have social justice feminist style—where freedom and choice are available to all persons and no one individual or group is privileged.

Penny Cadrain

Nicolle Lacelle, *Entretiens*. Montréal: Les Éditions du remue-ménage, 1988.

Dans l'avant-propos du livre Nicole Lacelle mentionne que ses entretiens avec Madeleine Parent et Léa Roback sont avec deux syndicalistes, féministes et militantes pour la paix qui sont peu connues du grand public et qui pourtant ont contribué à notre histoire politique et sociale.

Le livre de Nicole Lacelle se divise en deux parties, la première portant sur Madeleine Parent et la deuxième sur Léa Roback. Il présente des entretiens qui se sont déroulés de l'automne 1986 au printemps 1987. Chaque partie est accompagnée de plusieurs pages de photographies. Le livre est écrit dans un style simple et vivant. Les deux femmes racontent et réfléchissent sur l'organisation syndicale, l'ancienneté, l'évolution militante, les femmes en grève surtout dans diverses villes du Québec et en Ontario, les femmes pendant la guerre, les usines de guerre, la formule Rand, le maccarthysme, le lesbianisme, le racisme, l'avortement, le Berlin des années 20, les années 80, la question nationale, le référendum et le libre-échange.

Mais qui sont ces deux femmes engagées? Madeleine Parent est née en 1918, obtient son éducation au couvent du Sacré-Coeur à Montréal et poursuit ses études à l'Université McGill. C'est là qu'elle rencontre des socialistes de l'époque et choisit de travailler pour modifier le sort de la classe ouvrière, active surtout dans le mouvement syndicaliste. Elle raconte sa participation à l'organisation des travailleuses des industries de guerre et à l'organisation syndicale de l'industrie du textile. Elle parle en particulier des luttes des employées et employés à la Dominion Textile à Valleyfield et à la Ayers Woolen Mills à Lachute. De 1952 à 1967, Madeleine Parent fait du travail qu'elle qualifie d'arrière-garde dans le syndicalisme. Elle travaille surtout en Ontario; en 1967, elle s'y établira avec son mari Kent Rowley.

Léa Roback naît à Montréal en 1903 dans une famille juive. À l'âge de 18 ans elle travaille dans une boutique de nettoyage et le soir dans un théatre à vendre des

billets. En 1925, elle se rend en France pour étudier. En 1929, elle se trouve à Berlin qui connaît la montée de l'antisémitisme et du nazisme. De retour à Montréal, elle est animatrice de quartier dans Rosemont, puis oeuvre dans l'organisation syndicale en particulier à l'Union de la robe et à l'usine de la R.C.A. Victor, à Saint-Henri. Elle travaille dans cette usine de 1941 à 1952, et est très active auprès des femmes. Elle est membre du Parti Communiste en Europe et au Canada, mais elle démissionne en 1958 à cause de différences d'opinion au sein du parti sur la question nationale.

Enfin, Nicole Lacelle amène ces deux femmes actives à nous parler des années 80. Madeleine Parent est maintenant engagée dans le Comité canadien d'action sur le statut de la femme où elle tente de rapprocher les femmes du Canada anglais et du Québec. Léa Roback croit que les années 80 sont difficiles, mais qu'il y a des gens qui sont prêts à faire la lutte (p.179).

Ces entretiens nous font connaître deux femmes spéciales, engagées qui ont choisi d'oeuvrer non pas sur la scène politique, mais dans le mouvement syndical et dans celui des femmes.

Louise Carpentier

Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*. London: The Women's Press, 1984.

As a feminist and an embroiderer I found this book to be fascinating and enlightening, although I wonder if non-feminists embroiderers would find it so. Parker, an art historian gives us a tightly argued and wonderfully researched social history of embroidery from about the ninth century to the present. She shows how notions of what it meant to be feminine over time became inextricably bound up with embroidery. Except for her discussion of the 20th century, she concentrates on Britain, with an occasional foray into colonial America.

In chapters one and two Parker begins her examination of the relationship between the ideology of femininity and embroidery with a look at how embroidery was viewed by the Victorians. She argues convincingly that the way we moderns view embroidery was influenced by Victorian writers, as are many of our attitudes. The Victorian image of embroidery was of a solitary activity, done by women alone in their homes, a natural expression of femininity. Victorians were also fascinated by the middle ages, and one of their cherished images was that of the lady alone in her room whiling away her time with her embroidery as she waited for her lover. This imaged scene can be found in both painting and poetry. The facts were quite different: women embroidered in groups and often as professionals in guilds along with men.

During the middle ages, embroidery was considered an art in the same way sculpture, metal work, and painting were; and its practitioners used the same stock of images. It was an important art for the production of church decoration and vestments as well as for the making of gorgeous and expensive items for the use of the nobility. Church vestments, particularly copes, were made with a great deal of gold thread. Because the Victorian authors couldn't deny that women worked in embroidery guilds and were therefore professionals, they invented a division of labour that didn't exist in reality. They insisted that only the men worked with the

gold thread, that only men were the professionals. By her examination of contemporary records, Parker shows that this idea was created entirely by Victorian authors. It was accepted as fact by most subsequent historians of embroidery and most books on the art now repeat that gold embroidery was done by men. (For example see Mary Gostelow, *Embroidery: Traditional Designs, Techniques, and Patterns from all over the World.* London: Cavendish, 1982.)

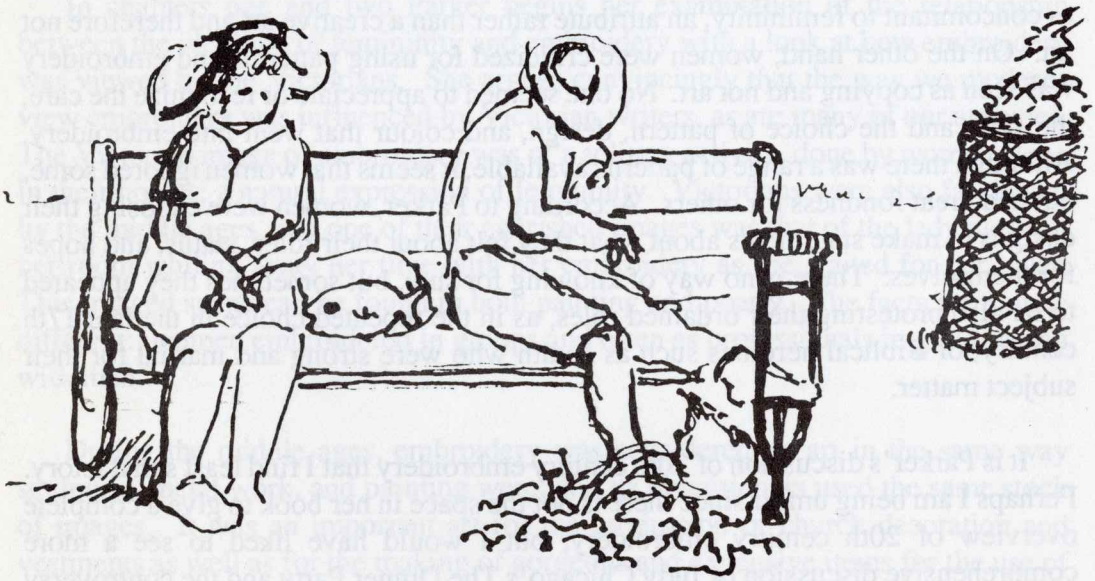
Chapters three to eight examine embroidery from the middle ages to the present time. Using letters, diaries, educational tracts, writings on the nature of women, and the evidence of the embroideries themselves (including revealing sampler verses) Parker traces how embroidery gradually left the public sphere of guilds and entered the private sphere of the households of the upper and then the middle classes. In the process embroidery lost its status as an art. On the one hand, embroidery was seen as concomitant to femininity, an attribute rather than a creative art and therefore not art. On the other hand, women were criticized for using patterns, and embroidery was seen as copying and not art. No one seemed to appreciate or recognize the care, the skill, and the choice of pattern, design, and colour that went into embroidery. Although there was a range of patterns available, it seems that women ignored some, but had great fondness for others. According to Parker, women were choosing their designs to make statements about what they felt about their roles, status, and hopes for themselves. There is no way of knowing for sure, but sometimes they appeared to be also protesting their ordained roles, as in the repeated choice in the late 17th century, of Biblical heroines such as Judith who were strong and martial for their subject matter.

It is Parker's discussion of 20th century embroidery that I find least satisfactory. Perhaps I am being unfair since there is not the space in her book to give a complete overview of 20th century embroidery, but I would have liked to see a more comprehensive discussion of Judy Chicago's The Dinner Party and the controversy that arose over it in feminist art circles. Parker also quotes women who love to embroider, but refuse to do so in public places because of ridicule or the condescending attitude of their peers. I know a number of women who do their needlework at meetings, discussions, and whatever. I do it myself. A friend embroiders her way

through interminable departmental meetings. She said it makes the meetings bearable. And nobody has nasty comments.

The *Subversive Stitch* is an important contribution to both Women's Studies and Art History. It is readable and scholarly and highly recommended.

Pearl Ostroff



J.C. Bologne, *La Naissance interdite*. Paris: Olivier Orban, 1988.

La Naissance interdite se situe dans ce courant d'histoire de la vie privée qui renouvelle l'histoire des mentalités en interrogeant de façon soutenue le rapport au corps. On se souviendra que l'auteur de cette étude, J.C. Bologne, a publié il y a quelques années une *Histoire de la pudeur*.

L'auteur regroupe trois enquêtes sur la stérilité, l'avortement et la contraception au moyen âge, en montrant que ces trois réalités ne se distinguent pas toujours clairement au cours de la période, mais se fondent dans le vaste domaine de la «non-naissance». Ses sources sont d'une grande diversité: traités théologiques, encyclopédies, recueils d'*exempla*, pénitentiels et manuels de confesseurs, mais surtout documents médicaux et juridiques. Le propos de l'auteur est avant tout de montrer que la caste médicale a tenu sur la vie sexuelle un discours original et qu'elle a été à l'origine d'un changement des mentalités et des pratiques. Rôle méconnu, puisque notre perception de la morale sexuelle au moyen âge se fonde sur les oeuvres largement diffusées des théologiens, la médecine médiévale étant encore peu éditée. La présentation de ces documents peu accessibles et ces pistes de lecture du discours médical sont d'un grand intérêt. Une longue fréquentation des textes souvent allusifs ou lacunaires permet à l'auteur de repérer des constantes. Pour lui, les ordonnances du médecin peuvent se lire à l'envers: les conseils ou mises en garde pour une union féconde et une grossesse sans risque sont révélateurs, *a contrario*, des moyens contraceptifs et abortifs de l'époque.

De cette confrontation entre, d'une part, la doctrine officielle de l'Église sur la sexualité et, d'autre part, les pratiques et les attitudes mentales révélées par de trop rares documents, se dégagent quelques conclusions majeures. La stérilité, tout d'abord, n'est pas seulement malédiction divine ou effet d'un maléfice. Il faut porter au crédit des médecins médiévaux une longue analyse des causes physiques et psychologiques de la stérilité. Analyse tributaire de la théorie des tempéraments, héritée de l'Antiquité, qui domine alors la pensée scientifique. Ainsi la stérilité

masculine—universellement reconnue au moyen âge—est due à un manque de chaleur, de «ventosité» ou d'humidité; les analyses de la stérilité féminine, plus complexes, diagnostiquent un excès de chaleur ou de froideur, de sécheresse ou d'humidité qui altèrent le sperme. Quant à l'influence du psychisme, les médecins médiévaux l'avaient envisagée sous la forme d'un «accident de l'âme».

Il est difficile d'établir une nette démarcation entre la contraception et l'avortement à une époque où le breuvage d'herbes est le remède universel. Pour ne citer qu'un exemple, la rue (*Ruta graveolens*), souvent prescrite comme anaphrodisiaque ou emménagogue, est la plante abortive par excellence. Cette réserve faite, l'auteur avance quelques hypothèses. Il semble que la contraception ait été tolérée et largement pratiquée dans certaines couches de la population pour qui la naissance est socialement inacceptable: clercs, prostituées, célibataires. Les procédés contraceptifs les plus répandus auraient été les «positions interdites» des théologiens, mais les textes médicaux font également état de potions, fumigations, d'emplâtres, de pessaires. Ces pratiques ont dû être partagées par les couples mariés. Cependant les documents attestent surtout la mortalité infantile, les fausses-couches, et les «accidents» dus à l'imprudence des mères, souvent mentionnés dans les pénitentiels et les manuels de confession.

L'avortement est provoqué par l'absorption de puissantes décoctions, souvent fatales à la patiente. La pharmacopée médiévale ne compte pas moins de 250 plantes abortives. Par ailleurs, on peut trouver des traces de recettes abortives dans les nombreuses mises en garde aux femmes enceintes, dans l'insistance des médecins et les théologiens à interdire les fardeaux, les chevauchées, les ceintures serrées, les coups (!). Au terme de son étude, l'auteur incline à croire que la doctrine de l'Église n'a pas eu autant de poids qu'on ne le croit sur les fidèles: «Escommunié est ung mal dont l'en garist», dit le proverbe médiéval. Quant à la justice civile, elle est souvent indulgente. Rappelons enfin que le débat théologique sur l'avortement est fondé sur la théorie de l'animation du foetus qui se prête à de multiples interprétations.

Qu'en est-il maintenant de cette «nouvelle conception de l'amour, de la femme, de la sexualité, étonnamment moderne», annoncée sur le quatrième de couverture? Tout d'abord ce jugement ne renvoie pas à l'ensemble du moyen âge, mais au XIIIe siècle, apogée de la chrétienté médiévale (J. le Goff), siècle en lequel l'oeuvre romanesque de Jeanne Bourin nous a habituées à voir un âge d'or de la femme. On sait qu'à cette époque l'amour courtois et l'aristotélisme—adapté à la pensée chrétienne par Thomas d'Aquin—convergent en une justification théorique du plaisir. Selon J.C. Bologne, le succès de ce double mouvement de revalorisation a été étayé par le discours médical qui apporte, dans sa théorie de la génération, une justification scientifique au plaisir féminin. Le médecin médiéval croit en effet que la conception est due à l'émission simultanée des deux spermes, féminin et masculin. Le plaisir féminin devient donc une condition *sine qua non* de la fécondité. Cette caution du plaisir conjugal et du plaisir féminin par les autorités religieuses et médicales ne survivra pas à la fin du moyen âge. Dès la Renaissance s'amorce un «lent cadenassement du corps féminin qui triomphera au XIXe siècle» (p. 281). L'association du mariage et du plaisir conjugal ne reviendra qu'au XXe s. dans les sociétés occidentales : c'est en cela que le XIIIe s. rejoint notre «modernité». Faible gain, pensons-nous, que cette brève attention portée au plaisir féminin, à la faveur d'une méprise scientifique, et qui concerne l'épouse procréatrice, dans une société de pouvoir héréditaire qui voit dans la stérilité une malédiction. Il demeure que le XIIIe s. a été, dans l'Occident chrétien, l'une des périodes où les cadres spirituels, esthétiques et juridiques ont été moins contraignants pour les femmes!

Tout au long de cette étude, J.C. Bologne mentionne des «secrets de femme», jalousement gardés, et disparus avec leurs détentrices: secrets sur les aphrodisiaques, sur l'accouchement, recettes contraceptives et abortives. L'auteur relie le déclin de cette culture marginale à la naissance de la littérature érotique au XVIe siècle. À l'autre extrémité de la culture féminine, nous avons les traités de la sage-femme Trotula (XIe s.) qui allient une connaissance des auteurs antiques enseignés à Salerne—haut-lieu de la médecine médiévale—à une science empirique des patientes, et des patients. Car, en ce qui a trait aux relations sexuelles, le médecin prescrit et la sage-femme traite.

Bref, on ne peut que saluer le travail de recherche, d'analyse et de réflexion de l'historien. Travail stimulant qui incite à poursuivre la recherche sur la médecine des femmes au moyen âge, à débusquer, qui sait, les manuscrits d'autres Trotula et à les éditer!

Claire le Brun

Nothing to fear

Katharine Asals

When Mama found out she was pregnant with Nykola, Papa was away working on the railroad. He'd been gone most of the winter and we expected him back any day.

It was April, 1934—I was twelve years old. We'd been in Canada just a year and a half. From the Ukraine we'd gone to a farm in North Dakota, but the drought and the grasshoppers had wiped out the crops and everything we had. We travelled farther north and farther west, looking for something better, and had ended up on a little piece of land just east of Vilna, Alberta, not far from the border with Saskatchewan. We built a house there with logs and mud—one room for the animals, one for us. Sophia and I slept on the hay, and Tetiana, Pavlo, and Wasyl slept in the bed with Mama and Papa. The land wasn't bad, it hadn't all gone to dust like it had farther south, but the weather was dry that first year, and the crop failed. We had nothing to fall back on.

Word was around that they needed men in B.C. to do some work on the railway, so Papa went off. We had some vegetables stored, and some cows and chickens that got us through the winter. Mama sold eggs to local people, and hunted rabbits sometimes for extra food. It was a long winter for her without Papa—she had five of us to feed and care for on her own.

Sophia, Pavlo, Tetiana and I would walk through three miles of snow to school every morning. We looked forward to school—we all liked our teacher, Miss Feniak. She always had a big pot of some kind of soup with potatoes and carrots and things sitting on the stove at the back. I think she asked for donations from neighbourhood people, because I knew she wasn't rich either. She was too skinny, and her clothes were old and worn.

There were other Ukranians in our class—there were plenty of Ukranian families in the area—but somehow the anglo kids managed to keep us all on edge. They'd pull stunts on us—putting dung in our boots or our coat pockets. We never told Miss Feniak—nobody wanted to drag her into the wars that went on.

That February we had a heavy blizzard that went on for days. On the first morning of the storm, the four of us headed out to school in the snow, slow but determined. We'd gotten about halfway when a car pulled up beside us and the driver rolled down the window. It was Mr. Thomson, a local man, driving his kids to school. The children stared out at us, their faces blank, expressionless. Their father, once he recognized us under our hoods and scarves, rolled up the window without a word and drove on.

It was May when Papa came back. He arrived dirty and tired, but smiling, late one afternoon. Tetiana ran up to him and was swung up in the air, laughing, and Wasyl begged to be lifted up also. I stood just outside the house with Mama whose head was down. Papa came towards us hesitantly. He touched Mama's shoulder gently,

"Chiruchka?"

Silence.

"It didn't go so good, Chiruchka, not like we'd expected. It was terrible hard work, and they paid us almost nothing in the end."

No response.

"Chiruchka? Aren't you going to say anything, aren't you glad to see me?"

She raised her head and stared him in the eye a moment before she said,

"Don't you see, Chiruck, I'm getting big again. We're going to have another little one."

Papa stood looking at her a moment. Suddenly he slapped her across the face. She held her face turned away from him, the muscles in her cheek hard, the skin reddening. We were frozen, horrified. Papa only hit us when we were bad, and Mama was never bad.

After a minute Papa's shoulders began to slope, and he dropped to his knees and buried his face in Mama's skirt, sobbing.

"Forgive me, Chiruchka, forgive me."

Nykola was born three months later, in the summer heat. The midwife came from six miles away, and Mrs. Senko and her sister from next door came to help. All night they were up around the bed—I tried to get Wasyl and Tetiana settled to sleep in the hay—they wouldn't stop fussing. Everybody was too hot and excited. Mama's face was bright and sweaty.

I was still sitting up, watching, when Nykola was born—the others had fallen asleep. Papa was sleeping in a chair—he didn't wake 'til it was all over. The baby was silent, didn't make a sound, but blinked his eyes in the dim light of the room.

That August, Papa shot the moose. He'd shot moose before, but usually in the wintertime when food was running low. There was a lake just North of us that was a good spot for moose. Papa took many trips back and forth, bringing the meat back to the house.

We never did figure out who it was who told the police—they just appeared one afternoon. I was just coming back from school as the car pulled out with Papa sitting in the back seat, staring straight ahead. Mama ran after the car yelling and shaking her fist after them. "He has done nothing, he has done nothing!". She was furious.

Her English wasn't good enough to understand very well what was going on—she knew only that it had something to do with the moose.

We found a lawyer in town to help us, to explain what was happening to Papa. Apparently there was a law that said you couldn't hunt moose during the summer—Papa hadn't known that. It wasn't a serious crime, but his case was delayed and he sat in jail for months. After six months we were told that he had been transferred to a psychiatric institution because he was showing signs of psychotic behaviour. Mama didn't take it well. Her optimism about making a life in this country was souring quickly. What kind of people would take away a peasant woman's husband for no reason, leaving her on her own with six children?, she wanted to know. Finally, we got a notice from a psychiatrist where Papa was, saying that Papa was sick, crazy, and should be sterilized. Mama was supposed to approve his sterilization, or they would deport all of us. She wasn't having any of it. She split us up among the neighbours, and then disappeared into the bush with the few things she needed to survive.

Nykola and I stayed with the Kosakewyczes, who lived in town. Iwan, the father, was unemployed, and Anna, the mother, took in laundry for a few people. With the money she made and what he received from the relief program they could just manage to support themselves. They had four young children, and couldn't really afford to have us stay with them, but they were kind and tried to help others in difficulty. They were political people—very different from my parents. Their house was always busy with people and talking. Mama had said that politics would get you into trouble, but it seemed to me we'd gotten into trouble anyway.

Iwan came home one day, talking about a new woman clerk who was working at the relief office. Apparently, a lot of the men had been making a fuss, demanding to know why a woman had gotten that job when they, family men, couldn't find work.

"What do you think, Eva, do you think she's taking away a man's job?".

"Don't taunt the girl, Iwan", said Anna.

"I'm not taunting her, I'm asking her whether she thinks the woman has a right to the job—or whether she thinks a woman's place is in the kitchen."

Iwan asked funny questions, I thought. He was always talking in terms of rights and freedom and talked about people in lots of different countries as if he'd been to all of them. He told us that that year, 1935, there were over one million unemployed men across Canada, and that some of them were kept in work camps run by the army. So when they said that I should get a job to help my poor mother, I was skeptical about the possibilities. However, it was decided that Iwan would take me to Edmonton and help me find something. Anna assured me she would take care of Nykola.

In Edmonton, we stayed with friends of Iwan's. The house was full of women cooking and talking. They were preparing for a march that was passing through town the following day, of unemployed men from the camps in B.C. They were travelling on the freight trains, and planned to continue on to Ottawa to demand better conditions for the unemployed. Some of the men in town were talking about joining in—excitement was high. People seemed to think that this was it—that now the prime minister would have to do something about unemployment.

In the morning Iwan took me to a soda shop that had advertised in the paper: girls wanted. When we got there, the line up was already down the street and around the corner. A fight had started out near the front of the line where someone had tried to nudge her way in. I stared openly—so this was the city. Iwan pulled me away and suggested we try looking into domestic jobs.

The family that hired me were called Grayson. They lived in a big house like I'd never seen before, and I was given a room to myself with a radio in it, and my own bathroom. I listened to the radio constantly while I worked—I loved the news especially, it made me feel like the world outside was very close. When the Regina riot happened I could picture Iwan's friends there, in the middle of everything.

There were two young children to care for, and I did most of the cooking and cleaning. Every other Sunday afternoon I was free, and I would walk around the city, getting to know the different neighbourhoods. I'd been there for about eight weeks the first time Mr. Grayson came up to my room. Mrs. Grayson would go out sometimes in the evenings to charity activities, and when the kids were asleep I would take some sewing into my room and listen to the radio. When Mr. Grayson came in that first time, I turned down the radio and stood, expecting that one of the children needed tending. But his manner was strange—his voice tried to be playful, but it was full of threat. A cold, hollow confusion crept into my head as he locked the door and told me to take off my clothes.

After he had left I put my clothes back on, pretending to myself that nothing had happened, nothing had gone wrong. The room was the same, the radio was still on. It was a speech I had heard before, President Roosevelt was speaking: We have nothing to fear but fear itself.

Mrs. Grayson began to sense that something was up, although she never said anything. Instead, she became cold with me. She watched me closely once she realized that I avoided having to speak or make eye contact with Mr. Grayson. I became irritable with the children and cared less and less whether or not I was doing a good job. I recoiled at the sight of my own face in the mirror.

One Sunday I went out as usual, but headed straight for the railway tracks. It was easy to find out where the different trains were going, and once I had swung myself up onto the train, I began to breathe easier. I had escaped. I arrived back in Vilna the next morning. Nobody was home at the Kosakewyczes. Outside I met a neighbour who told me that everyone was up at our house, that Mama had come back and the police were there. I started towards home.

The front yard of our house was full of people—all the neighbours had come out and were standing around in huddled groups. The police were just getting ready to leave—apparently they had been convinced that we were good citizens with many

friends and they should let us stay in Canada. I found my mother, surrounded by my brothers and sisters, glaring after the police. She had won one round, at least.

It was a big supper that night. Many people stayed to eat with us, and everybody was still wired after the day's long and tense confrontation. It was late when they finally went home, and we helped Mama tidy up the kitchen.

"That's enough, now", said Mama, "Eva, put the others to bed."

She was tired and distracted now that the guests had left. I wanted desperately to talk to her about Mr. Grayson—I was sure she would understand and would make sure I never had to go back. While I put Tetiana and Sophia to bed, I watched her moving around the kitchen. She was more dissheveled and haggard looking than she had been. Living in the bush had aged her. I wished Papa were there for her, even though I wanted her to myself.

There were voices outside, the sound of people coming to the house, and then there was a loud bang on the door. We looked at each other, frightened, but they had already pushed the door open and come into the room. There were more of them now, about seven policemen, and outside I could see Mr. Grayson. Wasyl and Nykola started to wail. As one of the police officers approached them, Mama ran to the bedside, spitting curses at him. The other officers stepped up behind him, and while he grabbed my mother and yanked her aside, the others headed for the bed. One of them had Tetiana, and I jumped on his back and bit hard into his shoulder. He slapped me back across the room, and my head thudded against the wall of the cabin. Dazed, I watched the confused movements around the room. I saw Mama in the doorway, refusing to go through. She looked back over her shoulder and cried, "Eva!", and was gone. I closed my eyes.

Slow, heavy steps came towards me. I raised my eyes to the face of Mr. Grayson far above me. He looked at me a moment and said,

"They have taken your family away for deportation. I asked explicitly that they leave you behind, as you are indispensable to my household. They agreed only on the condition that you return to work for me. If you don't agree, you face them on your own."

He put on his gloves, turned and walked to the door.

"I'll expect to hear from you, then?"

He waited a moment, then left. A car pulled away outside.

Most of the night I paced the house. I touched familiar objects, turning them over in my hands: my father's bible, the child's clothes that were too small for Wasyl but still too big for Nykola, the radio Sophia found that had never worked. Our home seemed very simple and vulnerable, fragile. Somehow my parents' determination to survive here had not been enough—they had not been able to foresee the kinds of difficulties they would have.

When the day began to brighten outside, I gathered some clothes and food in a bundle and took one last look around the house. The prospect of staying in Canada on my own terrified me, but I knew that if I returned with my parents, it would mean total defeat. As long as I remained, and as long as there was a chance for even one of us to settle here, there was hope. I closed the door behind me and started down the road. It was sixty miles back to Edmonton.

Watch. Wait.

Norma Depledge

"Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait. What decision will you make?" whispered the Ticking Clock.

"Bangkok?" whispered Alice.

"Where are you bound? Where are you bound?" asked Joseph Conrad Mouse.

"Into another darkness," rasped Clock.

"Do you think so?" asked Alice.

"I don't think at all," said Clock.

"You *must* think, or you couldn't ask questions," said Alice.

"*You* must think," said Clock.

"What shall I think of?" asked Alice.

"Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait. What decision do you make?"

"I told you my decision."

"You told us your indecision."

"Indecision, indecision," echoed J.C. Mouse.

"What's your decision about the King?" asked Clock.

"I haven't decided. It wouldn't be nice," said Alice.

"Typical," said Clock.

"What do you mean?" said Alice.

"Typical, typical," said J.C. Mouse.

"Typical what?" said Alice.

"Typical Alice," said Mouse.

"Typical rot," said Clock.

"Rot!" said Alice. "How can you be so unkind?"

"Us, unkind? We're all in your mind."

"Why doesn't anyone answer me sensibly?" asked Alice.

"We don't get paid to answer."

"You don't get paid at all."

"Then don't complain," said J.C. Mouse.

"Do the dishes," said Clock.

"The dishes, the dishes," said Mouse.

"Why do you push me around?" asked Alice.

"Because we can," said Clock.

"No you can't," said Alice. "I won't be pushed around."

"Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait."

"Watch what? Wait for what?" asked Alice.

"Watch your step. Wait for answers," said the Clock.

"Where will I find the answers, Clock? You said you don't give answers," said Alice.

"And so I don't."

"You're no help at all, Clock."

"I'm not paid to help."

"What *are* you paid to do?"

"Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait," said Clock.

"What should we watch for? What should we wait for, Clock?" asked Joseph Conrad Mouse scrambling up Alice's back to her shoulder where he could get a better look at Clock's face.

"Watch for Alice to make a decision. Wait for her to make a mistake."

Mouse craned his neck around Alice's shoulder to get a better look at *her* face. "When will you cave in, Alice? How soon? Oh, *do* do it now, while I'm watching. Don't you think it would be lovely if she would do it now, Clock?"

"Leave me alone," said Alice.

"How much time do you give her, Clock?" asked Mouse.

"I don't give her any. She can do it in her own sweet time," ticked Clock.

"Will there be a bang?" asked Mouse.

"Just a whimper I think," said Clock.

"I thought you weren't paid to think," said Alice.

"I'm not paid at all," said Clock.

"Not with a bang. Not with a bang," said Mouse.

"Leave me alone!" said Alice.

"Turn off the lights and do the dishes," said Mouse. "No one will see you then."

"I won't do the dishes," said Alice. "I won't."

"They're so untidy," said Mouse. "Do them. Do them. Do them in the dark so *you* can't see."

"I won't do them."

"You will," said Mouse. "You always do. Go ahead, cave in. Turn off the lights and cave in."

"Why don't you leave me alone. Why do you keep on at me?"

"It's what you want, really, isn't it," whispered Mouse. "It's what you're all about, Alice. Go on. Cave in."

"It's not. I won't."

"Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait," said Clock.

"I'll turn off the lights," said Mouse scampering down Alice's arm and bounding across to the table from her elbow. "I'll turn off the lights. Then you won't see."

"Stop! Stop! Clock, make him stop!"

"I'm not paid to stop."

"I hate you, Clock."

"Me?" said Clock. "It's *you* that you hate." "*You* that you hate. *You* that you hate. It's *you* who won't co-operate."

"Such a small thing to ask," said Clock.

"He didn't ask!" said Alice.

"Mere semantics. What a big fuss."

"It's not semantics," cried Alice. "He didn't ask!"

"Oh, tears!" said Mouse. "She's caving in."

"I'm not, I'm not."

"All over such a small thing to ask," said Mouse.

"HE DIDN'T ASK!"

"What a small thing to expect, then," said Clock. "And what a big fuss."

"You used to be nice," said Mouse.

"Yes. You used to be nice," said Clock.

"I'm still nice," said Alice tearily.

"Then do the dishes for the King," said Mouse.

"Yes, the King wants you to do the dishes," said Clock.

"The King wants to be King," said Mouse. "Wants to be King. Wants to be King."

"And so he is," said Clock.

"He's not the King," said Alice.

"Oh heresy!" said Mouse. "She says he's not the King. Who *is* the King if the King is not the King?"

"Alice wants to be King," said Clock.

"No I don't," said Alice.

"What do you want, Alice?"

"I just want to be Alice."

"Oh really!" said Clock disdainfully.

"Oh really!" agreed Mouse.

"What do you mean, 'Oh really!'" asked Alice.

"No one would want to be Alice," said Clock.

"Why not?" asked Alice.

"Because Alice will cave in," said Clock.

"Cave in. Cave in," said Mouse.

"No I won't," said Alice. "No I won't."

"Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait," said Clock.

"WHO DIDN'T DO THE DISHES?" boomed the King.

"Alice didn't. Alice didn't," shouted Mouse.

"Be silent!" said Alice.

"WHAT?" said the King.

"Nothing," said Alice.

"When will she cave in, Clock?" whispered Mouse.

"Watch. Wait. Watch. Wait," said Clock.

"Shut up. Shut up!" cried Alice.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"Nothing," said Alice. "I said nothing."

"Alice always says nothing," said Clock.

"I don't," said Alice.

"Do. Do," said Mouse.

"Don't," said Alice.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"Nothing," said Alice.

"Nothing," said Mouse. "Nothing. Nothing. Always says nothing."

"I don't! I'm going to say something. I'm going to tell the King," said Alice.

"Won't, won't," said Mouse.

"No use anyway," said Clock.

"Why not?" asked Alice.

"The King is deaf," said Clock.

"He's not," said Alice.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"Nothing," said Alice.

"Nothing, nothing," said Mouse.

"All Kings are deaf," said Clock.

"Deaf. Deaf," said Mouse.

"I'll tell him," said Alice.

"He won't hear you," said Clock. "The King is deaf."

"But *you* will hear me," said Alice.

"We won't listen," said Clock.

"Won't listen, won't listen," said Mouse.

"Then *I* will listen," said Alice.

"Listen to yourself?" sneered Clock.

"Yes," said Alice. "I think it's high time I listened to myself."

"High time, high time," said Mouse.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"I said, . . . I said . . . ," said Alice.

"Nothing," said Mouse. "Nothing at all."

"I said, ..."

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"Nothing," said Clock. "Typically nothing."

"I didn't say nothing!" said Alice.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"I didn't do the dishes," blurted Alice.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?"

"I didn't do the dishes," said Alice. "I *won't* do the dishes."

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"I won't do the dishes. I won't do the dishes unless you ask."

"KINGS DON'T ASK," boomed the King.

"Ooooh," said Clock.

"Ooooh, ooooh," said Mouse.

"The King's *not* deaf," said Clock.

"Not deaf. Not deaf," said Mouse.

"You're not the King," said Alice.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"You're not the King."

"I CAN'T HEAR YOU," boomed the King.

"*I* can hear me," said Alice. "And you're not the King."

"Not the King. Not the King," said Mouse.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?"

"King," pleaded Alice, "Why can't you hear?"

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" boomed the King.

"Hear me, King! Hear me," cried Alice. "You must hear me, King. Why can't you hear?"

"Is this her own sweet time?" whispered Mouse.

"I think so," said Clock, "for the King is deaf."

"The King's not deaf," said Alice. "He heard me before."

"Everyone is deaf," said Mouse.

"Everyone is deaf," said Clock. "No one hears Alice."

"The King heard me. You heard him reply."

"What did you say?" said J.C. Mouse.

"What did you say?" said Clock.

"Hear me," cried Alice. "Somebody hear me!"

"This is her own sweet time," said Clock.

"Oh, lovely," said Mouse. "How delicious to watch."

"I hate you," cried Alice. "You *want* me to cave in."

"Oh yes," said Mouse. "It's such fun to see."

"It's not," said Alice. "You're rotten to me."

"*You're* rotten to you," said Clock, "and quite, quite deaf."

"I'm not deaf, Clock. Don't be absurd. I'm listening to you."

"But you don't listen to *you*," said Mouse.

"I will," said Alice. "From now on, I will."

"Interesting," said Clock.

"Interesting?" said Mouse. "Why interesting, Clock?"

"She's not caving in," said Clock.

"I'd never have thought it," said Mouse.

"Nor I," said Clock.

"How disappointing you are Alice," said Mouse. "You used to be so nice."

"I used to be so silent," said Alice.

"What's the difference," said Mouse "since everyone is deaf."

"I'm not deaf," said Alice. "That's the difference."

"I think she heard herself," said Clock.

"How boring," said Mouse. "Do cave in, Alice. Why doesn't she cave in, Clock?"

"You're wasting my time, Mouse," said Clock.

"speak up, clock," squeaked Mouse. "speak up speak up."

"you lost our chance," sighed Clock.

"what's that you say?" asked Mouse. "speak up speak up."

"i can't speak up," said Clock. "you lost our chance."

"cave in, alice," squeaked Mouse. "cave in."

"She can't hear you now c a n t h e a r c a n t h e a r ...."

"I'm going to Bangkok," said Alice.

"a n o t h e r d a r k n e s s?" whispered Mouse.

"w a t c h w a i t w a t c h w a i t," said Clock.

News of the Institute

Congratulations

Lucie Lequin successfully defended her thesis "De la femme patriarcale à la femme sujète dans le roman québécois de l'après-guerre." on February 26, 1990.

On February 26, 1990, Debra Aubin and Avis Anderson, both students in Women's Studies, received Provost Scholarships for first year students in Women's Studies.

Dr. Jo Vellacott, Honorary Fellow of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute and the Women's Studies Visiting Professor for five years at Concordia (1982-1987) has just received the Barton Award of the *Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security*. The Barton Award is named in honour of the first chairman of the Institute, W.H. Barton, the distinguished former Ambassador to the United States in New York and Geneva.

On May 23, 1990 the Lesbian Studies Coalition of Concordia (LSCC) was recognized at the first ever Awards Ceremony of the Toronto Centre for Lesbian and Gay Studies. Four awards of $200 each were awarded by the Centre to honour individuals and groups who have made significant contributions in the development of Lesbian and/or Gay Studies in Canada. Nominated by Arpi Hamalian, Principal of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, the LSCC received a 1990 Achievement Award for their ongoing work as a student group to promote Lesbian Studies at Concordia University and elsewhere. Members of the LSCC, Patrizia Tavormina and Carolyn Gammon from Concordia, and Monica McQueen from London, Ont., were present in Toronto to accept the award.

Jeanne Ann Corrigal, B.A., received the Thérèse Casgrain Medal for Women's Studies, awarded to the most outstanding graduating student in Women's Studies.

The following students made the Dean's Honour List: J. Adrienne Alexander, *with great distinction*, honours in Sociology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology and member of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute; B. Tamarah Feder, Women's Studies, member of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute; Wambui Josephine Gitu, Department of Sociology and Anthropology and member of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute; Lisa Drupka, *with distinction*, honours in Anthropology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology and member of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute; Lesley Tager, Department of Political Science and member of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute; Helen Margaret Wheatly, *with distinction*, Women's Studies and member of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute.

Book Launchings

Lair, translation of *Antre*, written by Madeleine Gagnon and translated by Howard Scott, February 9, 1990 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Institute. Howard Scott is a graduate from the Département d'Études françaises and Women's Studies of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute.

Despite the Odds: Essays on Canadian Women and Science, edited by Marianne Gosztonyi Ainley, Adjunct Fellow of the Institute, March 27, 1990 from 5:00 to 7:00 P.M. at the Faculty Club (SGW) Concordia University.

Les femmes s'en mêlent/Making a World of Difference: A Directory of Women in Canada Specializing in Global Issues, edited by CCCI, directed by Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg, May 22, 1990 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Faculty Club (SGW) Concordia University. Many members and friends of the Institute are featured in this publication.

Delegation

A delegation (2 staff and 8 students) of Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario visited the Institute from the 18th to the 20th January, 1990. During their visit they

attended two women's studies classes and attended a presentation given by Dr. Sherene Razack on "Using Rights Language in Theory and Practice."

Adjunct Fellows

Chengiah Ragaven joined the Institute as an Adjunct Fellow in June, 1989. He was banned in 1967 and placed under House Arrest for five years in South Africa. He obtained political asylum in England and studied Sociology and Education at the University of London; Politics, Economics, and Philosophy at Oxford; African Politics and Sociology of Development at Sussex University; and in American Politics and Sociology at Cambridge. Currently engaged in research at the Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill, he teaches Sociology at Concordia and is actively involved in liberation struggles worldwide.

Judith Whitehead joined the Institute as an Adjunct Fellow in September, 1989. She received her Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from University of Toronto in 1988. She is currently an SSHRC post-doctoral fellow researching British and French images of women in India in the late nineteenth century, a formative period in the development of the social anthropology of India. She is interested in the general themes of women and development: Her Ph.D. thesis focused on the emergence of segmented labour markets in Indian agriculture by gender and casts. She is especially interested in discourses of development regarding Asian societies.

Adjunct Fellow of the Institute, Professor Peta Tancred has been appointed Director of the Centre for Research and Teaching on Women at McGill University, for the Period of June 1, 1990 to May 31, 1995.

Position

The Institute now has a tenure track position to be filled soon after the May 31, 1990 deadline for the advertisement.

New Courses

A Lesbian Studies course has been introduced in the women's studies program. Sharon Dale Stone, the instructor of this course, writes: "Lesbians in Society," which is being offered this winter for the first time, is not a typical women's studies course. What makes it unusual is that it presents a lesbian perspective on a multitude of issues. This allows lesbian students to relate to course material in a manner that other courses often preclude, while giving heterosexual students the opportunity to understand their lesbian sisters a little better. It encourages them to question any stereotypical attitudes they might have.

Rather than relying upon a core textbook which would necessarily provide a limited point of view, readings are drawn from a wide variety of books and periodicals. This gives students insight into just how diverse lesbians really are. In fact, a central theme of the course is that lesbians are all very different from each other, not only in terms of race, class, disability, etc., but also in terms of political consciousness. Aside from this, the course is loosely divided into sections, exploring the herstorical existence of lesbians (herstory is not history), the politicization of lesbianism, and issues in contemporary lesbian culture.

From my perspective as the instructor, the course has been a resounding success. It has provided a positive learning experience for both lesbian and heterosexual students, while the level of discussion during class has been of exceptionally high quality. The only drawback has been that there hasn't been enough time to discuss even more issues."

The Simone de Beauvoir Institute's Women's Studies program offered a new course, "Native Women", taught by Gail Stacey-Moore. The objectives of the course are: (1) to sensitize and educate students to the realities faced by Native women in the 90's, (2) to promote the recent individual and collective efforts at achieving social equality for Native people in Canada, (3) to engage in active discussion focused on the need to allure Native women to participate fully in the impending development of Native autonomy and (4) to investigate the dilemma facing Native women who

wish to retain their cultural identity while participating actively in the foundation of Native self-government.

Presentations sponsored by the Institute from January to April, 1990:

- Arpi Hamalian and Carolyn Gammon, "The CRIAW conference in Yellowknife."
- Annice Callahan, R.S.C.J., "Simon Weil's Struggle for Peace."
- A reading by Audrey Thomas, Canadian novelist and short story writer. Her book, *Intertidal Life*, was nominated for the Governor General's Award.
- Prof. Roberta Hamilton, "Feminist Theory and Motherhood 1970-1990.
- Judith Whitehead, "Constructing Universalities and Particularities: The Gender Division of Labour in Cross-Cultural Perspectives.
- Gisèle Halimi, lawyer, founding members of Choisir; informal talk.
- Patricia Hynes, "Engineering and Feminism: The Inroads."
- Margrit Eichler, Women's Studies/Feminist Studies: "Semantic Quibbling or Collective Self Definition.
- Joy Kwesiga and Lois Ochieng, Representatives of Action for Development (ACFODE). Visit sponsored by the Centre for Developing-Area Studies, McGill University, and financed by Partnership Africa-Canada; informal talk.

Three series sponsored by the Institute in 1989-90

A. Fellows' Seminar series: "Theorizing our Feminist Practices"

- Sherene Razack: Using Rights Language in Theory and Practice.
- Bina Freiwald: From Text to World: Feminist Literary and Cultural Studies.
- Linda Dyer: A Topic Related to Power, Prestige and Gender.
- Martha Saunder: Ethical Implications of Feminist Methods.

- Chengiah Ragavan: The Case of National Liberation Movements (South Africa).
- Homa Hoodfar: Anthropology and Gender Studies.
- Chantal Collard: Nature, Culture and Women: The Case of Adoption and Women in Charlevoix, Quebec.
- Susan Drysdale and Dana Hearne: On Understanding Feminism: Two Case Studies Involving Historical, Theoretical, and Methodological Problems.

B. Film and Discussion Series: "Women, Race and Class Oppression."

- A Voice of our Own. Premika Ratnam, Producer.
- Black Women of Brazil (Mulhere Negras). Silvana Afram.
- Black Mother, Black Daughter. An Atlantic Centre Production.
- Older, Stronger, Wiser, Studio D, NFB.
- Women Arise. V.N.S.
- Born in Flames. Lizzie Borden.

C. Women and The Environment Lecture Series.

- Gudny Gudmunsdottir: A Valuable Future on Healthy Earth.
- Kumud Sharma: Women and The Diminishing Forest: Struggle for Survival and Change.

International Women's Day

We celebrated International Women's Day by co-sponsoring a panel and the following three workshops on women and violence.

- Violence in the University
- Violence in the Home

- International Violence Against Women.

Conference of Feminist Education

The Institute hosted a working group of twenty feminist scholars and teachers from universities across Quebec and from francophone universities in the Maritimes. The group discussed emerging patterns and dilemnas in feminist education and planned a larger conference to take place at Concordia in 1992 on the theme feminist education.

The working group included: Marie Adrée Bertrand, Université de Montréal; Nicole Bourget, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières; Melissa Clark Jones, Bishop's University; Patricia Coyne, Bishop's University; Micheline DeSève, Université du Québec à Montréal; Bina Freiwald, Concordia University; Alice Guérette Breau, University of Moncton; Adèle Holcomb, Bishop's University; Lucie Lequin, Concordia University; Francine Rancourt, Université du Québec à Hull; Sherene Razack, Concordia University; Cécile Sabourin, Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue; Claudie Solar, Concordia University; Peta Tancred, McGill University; Marielle Tremblay, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi; Mair Verthuy, Concordia University.